



## Event Planning Kit

It's Your Land, Lend a Hand...

Communities across the country have joined together to celebrate our Nation's natural resources. You can be part of our ongoing effort to support stewardship of our public lands and promote volunteerism to people in your community.

Through a dynamic advertising and public relations campaign designed to raise awareness of Take Pride in America, we'll be letting people know how enjoyable it is to donate their time to public lands. Local events are a great way to introduce the benefits of improving your community.

You can take advantage of this historic opportunity by hosting or sponsoring a volunteer stewardship event. It's a great way to turn your passion for the environment into a promise for the future. You'll be building relationships and creating opportunities for growth that will help ensure the future of your state's natural resources.

A step-by-step guide to success.

To assure success for your event, we've put together all the materials you need from logistical how-to's to promotional support. Use the following *Strategic Planning Questions* to help you get started, the *Defining your Event* page to organize your goals and *Event Ideas* for sample event formats. Should you need more specifics, simply refer to the appropriate section of this guide. Keep in mind, this is simply a guide to help you plan. Your event doesn't

have to have all of the elements found in this packet, because events of any size can help promote public land stewardship.

Register your event and discover additional benefits.

Take Pride in America is dedicated to promoting registered events. Every registered event will be posted on [www. TakePride.gov](http://www.TakePride.gov). You will also be eligible to receive t-shirts, bumper stickers, water bottles and other promotional items from Take Pride.

To register your event, simply log on to [www.TakePride.gov](http://www.TakePride.gov) and complete the brief registration form. It is located under the "Volunteer" tab. Once your registration is received, your event's information will be added to the Web site.

### Event Planning at a Glance

- Strategic Planning
- Defining your Event
- Ways to Participate
- Event Ideas/Resources
- Working with the Media
- Media Advisory Template
- News Release Template
- Public Service Announcements
- Event Evaluation Form

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Dear Friend of Public Lands,

Take Pride in America® is pleased to provide you with a hand book to help you in your efforts to make Take Pride in America a significant part of your state, community or organization.

We know that as we work together, we can bring awareness for each citizen to become a steward of public lands. This hand book will give you information, ideas and resources to make that happen.

Hosting an event is a great way to show your community the good things that happen when citizens recognize the value of volunteering. It is a good way to bring awareness of your agency, participation in your program or interest in your products.

The guide materials will help you take advantage of the resources available through Take Pride in America. All events have the potential to be posted on [www.takepride.gov](http://www.takepride.gov), as well as in our monthly newsletter, "In Touch With Take Pride".

We have also included information about our program, including a Fact Sheet, Getting Involved, Take Pride Partners, Take Pride in America City Program, Awards and Recognition, Logo Guidelines and a list of our Charter Partners.

Please feel free to contact us any time with any questions or concerns you may have. We are here to help ensure the success of your local Take Pride program.

Sincerely,

Marti Allbright  
Executive Director  
Take Pride in America

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

As you begin to plan your event, here are some questions to ask yourself that can help you direct your focus and plan the best event possible.

*Why am I hosting this event?*

- Help people discover the joy of giving of themselves
- Raise awareness of public land stewardship
- It is part of a local or national event
- Improve community or special resource—park, beach, playground

*What specifically do I hope to accomplish?*

- Introduce the community to volunteering with hands on projects,
- Make public lands more attractive
- Prepare the community for tourists

*Who am I talking to or planning for?*

- Youth
- Senior citizens who take an interest in volunteer work
- All community members
- Members of a specific group or organization

*What kind of event and what types of activities best achieve this?*

- Clean up day
- Painting picnic tables at a local park
- Planting flowers etc.

*Is there anything I'm forgetting?*

- Event permits
- Safety and insurance
- Logistical requirements

*Who can help me get this together?*

- Partners
- Sponsors
- Land Managers

## **DEFINING YOUR EVENT**

Planning a successful event depends on having defined and measurable goals. If you are clear at the outset, it is much easier to conduct a post-event evaluation with attendees, sponsor and partners, which is about the only way you know with some certainty that you have accomplished what you set out to do! Best of all, it will help you to establish a benchmark against which the success of future events can be measured. Here are some questions to think about.

- Will this event help participants make volunteering on public lands part of their every day lives?
- Do you want to create or strengthen partnerships among local recreational and environmental organizations?
- Is your goal to make your organization recognizable as volunteer resource in your community?
- Are you encouraging awareness about public land stewardship?
- What are you interested in doing?
  - Are you interested in building public land stewardship
  - Creating resource advocates
  - Building conservation partners
  - Encouraging informed and loyal volunteers
  - Accomplish a specific task or project

Once you have organized your thoughts, develop a single statement that synthesizes your goal. Then, as you plan your event, you can begin to develop specific objectives that will enable you to measure success.

## **Ideas for Getting Involved**

Becoming involved in Take Pride is something everyone can do. Here are some ideas to get you started.

### **Congressional**

- Sponsor an essay contest for students to write what “Take Pride in America” means to them
- Include the Take Pride message in inserts and mass mailings sent to constituents
- Participate in Take Pride in America PSAs which will be broadcast in your area

- Honor outstanding volunteers with the Congressional Take Pride in America Award
- Send letters to National Award winners and nominees, thanking them for their volunteer efforts
- Attend a Take Pride in America event in your state or district
- Attend the Take Pride in America National Award Ceremony events
- Display the Take Pride in America logo on your Web site and link to [www.TakePride.gov](http://www.TakePride.gov)

### **Organization or Business**

- Plan events to observe designated national celebrations (National Public Lands Day, National Trails Day, National Volunteer Week, Make A Difference Day etc.) to underscore the Take Pride theme
- Work with your employees to implement stewardship programs
- Encourage businesses to lend equipment or storage space for a project which benefits public lands.
- Include mail inserts on Take Pride in mass mailings to employees or members
- Sponsor a photo contest and ask participants to submit pictures representing what taking pride in America means to them

## **EVENT IDEA #1**

### **State Park Cleanup**

#### **What makes this a valuable event?**

- It is an opportunity to bring the community together for a one-day cleanup that encourages working as a team without prejudice toward race, background or age.
- A Good for stress release and an opportunity to build new friendships
- Good for health

**Who should sponsor a cleanup?** Local community organizations, city governments, local environmental organizations, state Departments of Conservations and Natural Resources, restaurants, hardware stores and other businesses

**Suggested audience:** All community members, youth groups, civic organizations

**Suggested Length:** Full or half day

Half-day event:	8:00 am	kick off/distribute supplies
	8:30-12:00	clean up
	12:00-1:00	lunch
	1:00	door prizes

**Helpful Planning Tips:**

- Contact park officials early to become familiar with their needs.
- Publicize the event well in advance to ensure the maximum number of participants. Register your event at **[www.takepride.gov](http://www.takepride.gov)**.
- Choose a time of year that typically has the best weather for the event's purpose

**Equipment:**

Be sure to include information in your promotional materials about what you will and won't provide so volunteers don't arrive at the site expecting something and it's not there.

## **EVENT IDEA #2**

### **Federal Land Project**

Planning an event on Federal lands is a great way to have volunteers become public land stewards. There are thousands of possibilities for participating on Federal lands, but it is important to contact the land manager which oversees the area at which you would like to host an event to ensure they have projects and resources available for your volunteers.

There are also several organizations which host events involving trail construction and maintenance, which often takes place on Federal lands. Partnering with one of these organizations on your next event is also an option.

Here are some of resources for Federal partnership opportunities:

[www.takepride.gov](http://www.takepride.gov)

[www.volunteer.gov/gov](http://www.volunteer.gov/gov)

Bureau of Land Management

Forest Service

National Park Service

Fish and Wildlife Service

Bureau of Reclamation

These are just a few places to start looking for volunteer opportunities. If you have an idea you would like to host, contact our office or one of our Federal Partners for more information.

## **WORKING WITH THE MEDIA**

### **Why should I involve the media?**

By investing a little time, effort, planning and little money, you can execute an effective media campaign to promote your event. Consider making media relations a part of your event planning. Below are simple instructions on how you can use the media to garner attention for your event and organization.

### **Whom do I contact?**

Most often you will approach your local newspaper, television stations and radio stations. Once you decide on the media “outlet” to contact, you’ll need to identify reporters who are most likely to have an interest in volunteering, outdoor recreation, environmental issues and/or public lands. Create a list of contacts, including the outlet name, reporter’s name, phone number, fax number, email address and, if possible, preferred method of communication (i.e., phone, fax or email). Develop a working relationship with them, so when you call, they are more likely to listen.

The simplest way to track down this information is to call an outlet’s main number, which you can easily find in the phone book or on the Internet. When you make a call, *briefly* explain that you are pulling together a media list for an upcoming event and ask for some help. The receptionist or operator will likely transfer you to the newsroom, in the case of newspapers, or a producer, when calling a television or radio station. When asking for information, brevity and politeness are important.

### **When do I contact a media outlet?**

The best time to call is between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. The worst time to call a newspaper is generally after 3:00, because reporters and editors are on deadline and feverishly finishing stories. When it comes to broadcast, do not call one hour before the show starts.

### **What do I tell them?**

If you are pitching an event, know the key points you want to relay *before* you pick up the phone or craft an email. Take the time to write a *short*, 30-second script, and practice before you make your first call. Or take a few moments to work on an effective email message. Be sure you succinctly address the 5 W’s: Who, What, Where, When and Why. Remember, the more creative your event is, the more likely media will be interested.

Finally, be prepared to send the reporter, editor or producer the event details in a media advisory. Not only does an advisory provide all necessary information in one place, it’s a great way to follow up a phone call.



## **What materials should I put together?**

A **Media Advisory** invites reporters to an upcoming event. An advisory needs to be short and simple. Begin with a catchy lead sentence explaining why the event is important. Next answer the 5 W's (who, what, where, when, why) in a bullet-like format. If you're inviting television crews, be sure to note what part of your event will provide the best visual for their camera (i.e., Note to television producers: Kids will slosh through the creek at 2:30 p.m. to pick up trash.)

As you call reporters, they'll likely ask you for an advisory. But it's important to definitely send it to those you don't have the time to call. Send your advisory to your entire media list a week before your event. Unlike a birthday party, just because you send the advisory/invitation, don't assume folks will be clamoring to attend your event – no matter how great you think it is. Follow up is essential. A day or two before your event date, find time to call and confirm the attendance of reporters who've said they'll come, and make calls to those you didn't have time to contact initially.

A **News Release** generates interest among the media about your "news" – be it an event, project launch, or announcement. Releases spark curiosity and inspire further questions by reporters. Using a local angle, make your release brief, interesting and timely. Start with a short, attention-grabbing "hook" in the first sentence. Next include a quote from a relevant official or spokesperson, possibly expressing appreciation for volunteer efforts or explaining the purpose of the event. Your third paragraph can provide added detail on the merit and objective of the activity. Try to keep a release to one page. Include a contact name and number at the top, so a reporter knows who to contact with questions.

## **Do you have any tips?**

- Keep up-to-date media lists.
- Contact the media in advance of events.
- When contacting reporters, be aware of deadlines.
- When speaking to reporters, be courteous, brief and stick to the point.
- Use a media sign-in sheet at your event, so you know who to be sure to invite again.
- Keep an eye out for articles that may be published about your event and collect them for your files.
- Also, send a copy of articles to Take Pride so we can highlight the event on our Web site or newsletter. It will also be helpful when it comes time to submit nominations for the National Take Pride in America Awards.



INSERT YOUR LOGO/SEAL

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For Immediate Release  
INSERT DATE

Contact: INSERT PRESS CONTACT

## MEDIA ADVISORY

*Insert Headline*

**(Insert City, Insert State Abbreviation)** – Why should the media care about your event? Also include name of your organization, type of event, where and when.

Add details about event, showing media why they want to cover your event.

**WHO:** Who will be participating

**WHEN:** Day of week, month, day, year

**WHERE:** Location Street Address Any additional specifics about location

### **About Take Pride in America**

Take Pride in America® is a national partnership that encourages, supports and recognizes volunteers who work to improve our public parks, forests, grasslands, reservoirs, wildlife refuges, cultural and historic sites, local playgrounds, and other recreation areas. With more than 100 Charter Partners, Take Pride involves Federal, state and local governments; conservation, youth and recreation groups; and top national corporations and organizations. Together, we protect and enhance the special legacy all Americans share – our public lands that cover more than one in every three acres across the nation. For more information visit: [www.TakePride.gov](http://www.TakePride.gov).

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## **PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Take Pride in America Public Service Announcement Scripts (30 seconds)**

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Do you know that Americans share over 900 million acres of public lands?! One in every three acres of this great country is the “property” of the American people. When was the last time you tended to an acre? Take Pride in America is a national program that encourages and honors volunteers who work to improve our public lands – from beaches to prairies from urban parks to soaring vistas. It’s your land, lend a hand. To learn more, visit [TakePride.gov](http://TakePride.gov). (30 seconds)

We know that patriotism can take many forms – you can hang a flag on a doorstep or donate blood. But what better way to *show* America our love than by *caring* for it – *by planting a garden, repairing a playground or picking up litter*. Take Pride in America is a national program that wants you to volunteer to improve our public lands – from a local park to a national forest. It’s your land, lend a hand. To learn more, visit [TakePride.gov](http://TakePride.gov). (30 seconds)

When was the last time you took out the trash? I mean *really* took out the trash – took the trash out of a neighborhood park, took the trash out of a street gutter, or took the trash out of a neglected stream? Take Pride in America is a national program that wants you to volunteer to keep America clean – to protect and improve our public lands – from a local park to a national forest. It’s your land, lend a hand. To learn more, visit [TakePride.gov](http://TakePride.gov). (30 seconds)

### **Take Pride in America Public Service Announcement Scripts (15 seconds)**

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Americans share over 900 million acres of public lands! Take Pride in America is a national program that encourages volunteers to improve and protect our public lands – from beaches to prairies from urban parks to soaring vistas. It’s your land, lend a hand. To learn more, visit [TakePride.gov](http://TakePride.gov). (15 seconds)

There are many, self-less individuals who are committed to our country. Their call to duty? – Caring for our public lands. Join their ranks – volunteer to care for America. It’s your land, lend a hand. To find out how you can help, visit [TakePride.gov](http://TakePride.gov). (15 seconds)

When was the last time you took out the trash? *Really* took out the trash? – took the trash out of a neighborhood park or a street gutter? Take Pride in America is a national program that wants you to help keep America clean. It’s your land, lend a hand. To learn more, visit [TakePride.gov](http://TakePride.gov). (15 seconds)

## Take Pride in America Event Evaluation

Congratulations on completing your Take Pride in America® event! We thank you for your time and assistance in coordinating a successful event, and now we have one small request.

In order to help us recognize you for your hard work, we need to gather more information about your event. This information may be used in our newsletter, as a volunteer highlight on our Web site or in other publications. We don't want your effort to go unnoticed.

We know you will be recovering from the event and we don't want to make it difficult, but the information you provide will also be used to help Take Pride in America grow and become a better program for everyone.

This evaluation should take 4-7 minutes of your time.

The easiest way for us to receive information from you is by email, but other methods are accepted. Please email, fax or mail this evaluation form to:

**Take Pride in America**  
**1849 C Street, NW MS 3459**  
**Washington, D.C. 20240**  
**Fax: 202.208.5873**  
**Email: [www.TakePride@ios.doi.gov](mailto:www.TakePride@ios.doi.gov)**

In order for us to make sure you and your group receive recognition for your efforts in a timely manner, please fill out this form and send along this form with any other information at your earliest convenience. Other materials to include:

- Local news releases
- Press clippings
- Pictures (slides, prints or digital)

Don't forget!! Nominate your group or individual volunteers for our National Awards. More information about our Awards program can be found on our Web site at [www.TakePride.gov](http://www.TakePride.gov).

# Take Pride in America Event Evaluation

Name of Event and Host Organization:

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name:\_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_

State:\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:\_\_\_\_\_ Email

Address:\_\_\_\_\_

## Summary of event:

1. What work projects were accomplished? Please be as specific as possible. (Miles of Trails, Number of trees planted, number of structures built, invasive species removed, pounds of trash collected. etc.)

2. Number of volunteers:\_\_\_\_\_

3. Hours worked per volunteer:\_\_\_\_\_

4. Agencies are interested in learning about their volunteers to help them plan for future use of public lands. Please give us your best estimate of the ages of your volunteers:

Ages 10-18 \_\_\_\_\_%      Ages 19-30 \_\_\_\_\_%

Ages 31-50 \_\_\_\_\_%      Over 50 \_\_\_\_\_%

5. Please list any sponsors, partnerships, or local volunteer clubs that participated in your event.

6. What environmental education programs or projects were at your event? Did you use any of the environmental/conservation education materials provided by other organizations? Which materials?

7. How was Take Pride in America helpful in your event planning and execution?

8. What can we do next time to better facilitate your needs?

9. What was troublesome or didn't work?

10. What worked particularly well?

11. Did you refer to [www.takepride.gov](http://www.takepride.gov) for:

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Site manual            | <input type="checkbox"/> Media kit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Promotional items      | <input type="checkbox"/> Site list |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |                                    |

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12. Did you receive Take Pride in America promotional materials? If so, were they on time? Were they adequate?

13. What did you like most about participating in a Take Pride event?

14. What did you like least about participating in a Take Pride event?

15. Please tell us of any interesting comments from volunteers which you heard during the work day.

16. Are you likely to participate in the future?

Please to send any additional information that you think would help you carry out better Take Pride in America events. We truly appreciate the time spent preparing these materials and value your assistance. Thanks for working with us to enhance America's most important resource, our public lands.